

Serial Number: 09/546502
Art Unit: 3643

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 37, 38, 40 and 41 are amended. No claims are canceled. Claims 1-3 and 37-41 are pending in this application.

In connection with independent claim 1, applicant asserts that the prior art of record fails to teach or reasonably suggest of apparatus for receiving and securing an end segment of a line comprising, in combination, a body including a receptacle having inwardly directed extensions, an open first end leading to the receptacle and an opposing second end; the receptacle capable of receiving therein and the extensions impinging thereagainst the end segment; and a pair of resilient hooks attached to the second end of the body and disposed in an overlapping state forming a continuous loop in which a lure is engagable to the coupler by forcing the hooks apart and threading one of the hooks into and through a hook eye of the lure.

In connection with independent claim 37, applicant asserts that the prior art of record fails to teach or reasonably suggest of apparatus for receiving and securing an end segment of a line comprising a body including a receptacle having inwardly directed extensions, an open first end leading to the receptacle and an opposing second end; the receptacle capable of receiving therein and the extensions impinging thereagainst the end segment; and a pair of opposing plates attached to the second end of the body and biased together and prongs carried by and between the plates capable of securing a hook eye of a lure.

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35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-3 and 37 stand r jected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Drosdak (US Patent 5,469,652) in view of McMahon (US Patent 578,762), and claims 38-41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Drosdak (US Patent 5,469,652) and Drosdak 4,864,767). Examiner asserts that Drosdak '652 shows a connector having a body 7 having a receptacle having inwardly directed extensions 10 and that Drosdak '652 shows a coupler 8. Examiner asserts that McMahon shows a connector having a body a and a coupler b attached to the body that is capable of engaging and supporting a fishing lure. The examiner asserts that the coupler in McMahon consists of a pair of hooks disposed in an overlapping state forming a continuous loop in which the lure part is engagable to the coupler by forcing the hooks apart. Examiner concludes that it would have been obvious to provide Drosdak '652 with a coupler as shown by McMahon since merely one equivalent mechanical coupler is being substituted for another. Applicant respectfully traverses examiner's foregoing claim rejections and the reasoning underlying said rejections.

In Drosdak '652, the element denoted at 8 is not a coupler, but rather is a threaded female socket that threadably receives the threaded portion 4 of the butt end 2 of the leader. Female socket 8 is not a coupler capable of engaging and securing a lure. In McMahon, body a is a fishing line to which coupler b is attached. Coupler b is not a pair of hooks, but rather a coiled piece of wire.

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With regard to Drosdak '652 and McMahon, the issue of obviousness is whether it would be obvious to secure element *b* of McMahon to the end of connector 7. There is no such teaching in Drosdak and/or McMahon of making this structural combination. Drosdak teaches threadably securing a butt end of a leader to a threaded socket formed in one end of the connector 7 of Drosdak and that is all. McMahon teaches attaching coupler *b* to a fishing line *a* and that is all. Therefore, with respect to independent claim 1 applicant respectfully asserts that there is no teaching in Drosdak '652 and/or McMahon of, in combination, a body including a receptacle having inwardly directed extensions, an open first end leading to the receptacle and an opposing second end; the receptacle capable of receiving therein and the extensions impinging thereagainst the end segment; and a pair of resilient hooks attached to the second end of the body and disposed in an overlapping state forming a continuous loop in which a lure is engagable to the coupler by forcing the hooks apart and threading one of the hooks into and through a hook eye of the lure. With respect to independent claim 37 applicant respectfully asserts that there is no teaching in Drosdak '652 and/or McMahon of, in combination, a body including a receptacle having inwardly directed extensions, an open first end leading to the receptacle and an opposing second end; the receptacle capable of receiving therein and the extensions impinging thereagainst the end segment; and a pair of opposing plates attached to the second end of the body and biased together and prongs carried by and between the plates capable of securing a hook eye of a lure.

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Based on the foregoing, the section 103 rejections of independent claims 1 and 37 are deemed overcome. Because rejected dependent claims 2 and 3 depend from independent claim 1 and rejected dependent claims 38-41 depend from dependent claim 37, the section 103 rejections of dependent claims 2 and 3 and 38-41 are deemed moot and should be withdrawn. Applicant respectfully traverses examiner's rejections of dependent claims 38-41 and the reasoning underlying said rejections.

In view of the foregoing going, Applicant believes that all of the claims presently pending in this case are in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

Examiner's thorough and thoughtful consideration of this application is sincerely appreciated. Should there be any remaining issues, Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned for a speedy resolution.

Respectfully submitted,



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